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STATE FOR NEA/ARP; NEA/PPD; NEA/RA; INR/R/MR; PA; INR/NESA; INR/B;  
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WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE; NSC  
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TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [TC](#)  
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: NEW STRATEGY FOR IRAQ; RICE'S TRIP TO  
REGION

¶1. Summary: "Al-Khaleej" believes that the U.S. will continue its "colonial onslaught", in spite of the disasters that it has caused, as the price is only at the expense of Arabs. A columnist in "Al-Khaleej" views American foreign policy as very dangerous against the unity of Arab countries, whether national or internal unity. A UAE female columnist in "Al-Ittihad" stated that the American administration has failed in imposing security in Iraq because instead of instating a united national government, it installed a Shiite sectarian government. "Al-Bayan" opines that the purpose of Rice's trip to the region is to market the fact that the security of the region is linked to America not getting defeated in Iraq, and that the U.S. plan is aimed at curbing the extremists in the Middle East; while Arabs on the other hand are more concerned with the mechanism of implementing this security and feel the U.S. policy is over reliant on force. End Summary.

¶2. Under the headline "Strategy of War Contractors", Sharjah-based pan-Arab daily "Al-Khaleej" (circulation 90,000) editorialized on 1/15:

"Bush's new strategy or "the renewed" strategy is for Iraq but it actually goes beyond its borders and impacts Arab and non-Arab. Bush and his neoconservatives are obliged to continue "their contract" during the remainder of his term (2007-2008). This is despite the magnitude of the opposition his American wars have received from inside his country and from the world in general. Those who extended the contract on the war in Iraq do not see the world, especially the Arab region, except from perspective of power, of stabilizing the Zionist occupation of Palestine, and of creating conflicts in the Arab region, through ethnic and sectarian strife, while releasing false slogans about freedom and democracy... The colonial onslaught of neoconservatives, in spite of the disasters it created, still find momentum, through two things: first, the completion of its contract, regardless of the price as the price will be at the expense of Arabs, and the second: Arabs do not move a muscle in order to repel the attack; in fact, there are Arab neoconservatives who promote this attack as if it was the promised heaven on earth..."

¶3. Under the headline "More American floundering", Dr. Adnan Al-Sayed Hussein wrote in Sharjah-based pan-Arab daily "Al-Khaleej" (circulation 90,000) 1/15:

"The American foreign policy is exerting more pressure on Tehran and

Damascus, under the pretext that they were allowed to export terrorism to Iraq. This policy bears an ideological character as the U.S. claims that it faces extremism and tyranny with freedom and claims that it is on a mission to screen the area for moderates and extremists, between countries that believe in freedom and countries that oppose it. Accordingly, the new Bush plan requests that the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, Egypt and Jordan support the American project in Iraq during the year 2007 to counter Iranian intervention and Syrian influence. This may result in a disruption to the regional neighbors of Iraq after the collapse of the Arab regional system... and could yield a sectarian difference between Sunnis and Shiites. If we look at the American foreign policy, we can see how dangerous it is against the unity of the Arab countries, its national and internal unity, and how the issue of Palestinian has been forgotten..."

14. Under the headline "The American strategy and its premature failure", Abdul-Zahra Al Rekabi wrote in Sharjah-based pan-Arab daily "Al-Khaleej" (circulation 90,000) 1/15:

"It is expected that the pressure of public opinion on the American legislators to withdraw their support for President Bush will increase. They will therefore refuse to ratify the budget as required by the new American strategy, which will consequently prevent sending additional forces to Iraq."

15. Under the headline "U.S. strategy in Iraq: Security first", a UAE female columnist, Aisha Al-Merri, wrote in Abu Dhabi-based Arabic semi-official daily "Al-Ittihad" (circulation 65,000):

"The American administration failed to impose security in Iraq, and instead of inaugurating a government of national unity, it installed a Shiite sectarian government. Instead of the new government setting a goal to maintain stability and security, the priorities of the Iraqi government were to impose a new fait accompli leading the

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way for creating a sectarian Shiite country. The outcome of the American and Iraqi practices are bloodshed and security chaos, which has impacted and will continue to reflect on the whole region. Today the American administration knows that the Iraqi crisis centers on its management of the crisis, and the management of its available options. In spite of the options put forward by the Baker-Hamilton's report, which priority was to enhance opportunities for national reconciliation and the promotion of security through cooperation with Iran and Syria, Bush's administration resorted to a tactical trick. Instead of gradually withdrawing his troops, the President decided to increase the number of his troops in order to impose his new strategy. It is actually an old strategy for the American President to end his presidential term outside the Iraqi quagmire."

16. Another editorial in Dubai-based Arabic daily "Al-Bayan" titled "A trip of marketing and informing" (circulation 85,000) noted on 1/15:

"...Rice today comes with another task on the top of Bush's priorities: marketing the latest Washington plan for Iraq. This means the Arab region will be demanded to support and facilitate this plan's execution. However this is difficult, if not a big problem with a lot of caveats, because the plan is not clear and does not differ in substance from what was already tested and led to the situation where we have today... In her marketing, Rice circulates the fact that the security of the region is linked to America not getting defeated in Iraq, and that the plan is aimed at curbing the extremists in the Middle East. Of course, the countries of the region are keen on maintaining their security and on curbing extremism. But at the same time, they are relatively more careful on the mechanism of providing this security and stability. Today the region is living in an acute situation. The language of dealing with it through security only further exacerbates the problem."

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